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No. 7 Fifteen Year February 20, 1948

Amsterdam Volumes Are Going To Press These Days

Leading Scholars and Laymen Prepare for Amsterdam.- Nearly fifty leading theologians, students of social conditions and international affairs, are collaborating in producing four study books dealing with the subjects which will be discussed at the coming World Council of Churches Assembly at Amsterdam, August 22 to September 4. The four volumes will deal with the general subject of the Assembly, "Man's Disorder and God's Design". The titles of these volumes are "The Universal Church in God's Design" - "The Churches' Witness to God's Design" - "The Church and the Disorder of Society" - "The Church and International Affairs".

Among the authors are such leading churchmen as Professor Karl Barth, Professor Reinhold Niebuhr, Professor Hendrik Kraemer, Professor Emil Brunner, Professor Paul Tillich, Dr J.H. Oldham, Professor John C. Bennett, Professor Florovsky, Bishop A. Fjellbu, Miss Olive Wyon, Mrs. Katherine Bliss, Professor Pierre Maury, Dr Paul David Devanandan, Dr W.A. Visser 't Hooft, Professor E. Schlink, Bishop G. Aulén, Professor J. Ellul, Dr C.L. Patijn.

The fourth volume will appear first as a series of pamphlets, which will be printed in book form following the Assembly. In this pamphlet series Mr. John Forter Dulles of the United States and Professor J.L. Hromadka of Czechoslovakia are authors of two separate statements dealing with "Christian Responsibility in our Divided World". Baron F.M. van Asbeck, Kenneth C. Grubb, Dr Roswell P. Barnes and Dr O. Frederick Nolde are among the authors of related subjects in the field of the Church and international affairs.

These three volumes and series of pamphlets will serve as the material for study in the four sectional conferences of the Amsterdam Assembly, and will appear in a four volume series following Amsterdam.

Dr Henry P. Van Dusen of Union Theological Seminary, U.S.A., is the chairman of the Study Department, with Dr Nils Ehrenström and the Right Rev. Bishop Stephen Neill as co-directors. E.P.S.Geneva

Christian Cooperation in East Asia

The East Asia Commission under the auspices of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches held its first meeting at Manila from February 4 to 7, 1948. The meeting was attended by representatives from the Philippines, China, India, Indonesia, Siam and Korea. The International Missionary Council was represented by Dr J.W. Decker and the World Council of Churches by Bishop Stephen Neill. Dr Garcia of the Philippines was in the chair.

The Commission decided to recommend the calling of an East Asia Conference in China in October 1949. The question of the establishment of a joint office of the I.M.C. and the World Council will be submitted to this conference.

E.P.S. Geneva

FRANCE

Humanitarian Concern

The Council of the French Protestant Federation has asked its President, Pastor Marc Boegner, to send a letter to the President of the Republic. We quote the following extracts from it.

"The Council of the French Protestant Federation has requested me to communicate to you once again its attitude towards several points, which I know that you have constantly in mind.

"The conditions in places of detention, since the Liberation, have given cause for countless complaints, which I have expressed in the name of the Churches ever since the autumn of 1944". A plan of general reorganisation had been envisaged, but there seems to have been a hold-up in carrying it out.

"In most of these institutions, particularly in these intended only for short periods of detention, the over-crowding is an outrage to the most elementary demands of physical and mental morality and hygiene... In spite of the injunctions of the higher authorities, the subordinate staff indulges in odious forms of vexation and brutality... In a general way we feel obliged to denounce with all energy the over-frequent habits which, in Indo-China and Madagascar as well as in France itself, reveal the deep traces left on our compatriots by the abominable practices of the Gestapo. The repeated attacks on personal freedom, and on the rights and guarantees laid down in the Constitution, reveals a disorder in the functioning of the public services and in the spirit of those who carry them out, which cries urgently for your intervention. The honour of France is seriously involved..."

A large number of condemned persons could benefit by receiving an amnesty without any detriment to justice. The law of August 16, 1947 grants the amnesty to all condemned persons who were minors, eighteen years of age, when they committed the actions which led to their arrest. "This law should be carried into effect!... We demand the establishment of a revision procedure, which will enable the damage to be repaired quickly in all cases where it is possible..."

E.P.S.Geneva

No. 7 - February 20, 1963

Christian Conspiration in East Asia

The East Asia Consultation under the auspices of the International Ministry Council and the World Council of Churches held its first meeting at Manila from February 4 to 7, 1963. The meeting was attended by representatives from the Philippines, China, India, Indonesia, Siam and Korea. The International Missions Council was represented by Dr. D.M. Hoover and the World Council of Churches by Bishop Stephen Neill. Dr Gonzalez of the Philippines was in the chair.

The Consultation looked to recommend the holding of an East Asia Conference in China in October 1963. The question of the establishment of a joint office of the I.M.C. and the World Council will be submitted to this conference.

E.F.H.

Pakistan

Humanitarian Concern

The Council of the Pakistan Protestant Federation has asked the President, Rev. Lawrence Lowther, to send a letter to the President of the Republic. The gist of the following extracts from it.

"The Council of the Pakistan Protestant Federation has requested me to communicate to you once again the activities towards several political prisoners that you have constantly in mind.

"The conditions in places of detention, since the liberation, have given cause for considerable concern, which I have expressed in the name of the Churches over since the release of Janab. A plea of general humanitarian has been envisaged, but there seems to have been a delay in carrying it out.

"In most of these institutions, particularly in those introduced only for short periods of detention, the over-crowding is an outrage to the most elementary dictates of physical and mental normality and hygiene. In spite of the injunctions of the higher authorities, the subordinates still indulge in other forms of vexation and brutality... In a country in real danger to be engulfed with all energy the cry-frequent with the cry, Indo-China and Laos are as well as in France itself, reveal the deep trends left on our fellow-citizens by the shameful practices of the Dictator. The repeated outrages on personal freedom, on the rights and privileges left down in the Constitution, reveal a disorder in the functioning of the public services and in the spirit of those who carry them out, which makes urgently for your intervention. The future of Pakistan is seriously involved..."

A large number of condemned persons could benefit by receiving [illegible] without any sentiment to justice. The law of August 16, 1957 grant the amnesty to all condemned persons who were minors, children, aged of age, when they committed the actions which led to their arrest. "This law should be carried into effect!... We demand the establishment of a revision procedure which will enable the Courts to be the ultimate guardians in all cases where it is revealed..."

[illegible]

GREECE

Tenth Anniversary of the Aktines Movement

The Aktines Movement, which was started in 1938, is today celebrating its tenth anniversary. Its purpose is to bring Christian scientists into contact with one another. It publishes a periodical "Aktines", the last number of which is devoted to a survey of the work accomplished during these first ten years. "A spirit of living Christianity has replaced the materialistic and rationalistic spirit which - in Greece as elsewhere - has been troubling the scientific world for more than a century". Our readers will remember that at Christmas 1946 (see E.P.S. No. 46, 1946) a manifesto was published, signed by 181 Greek scholars, artists and men of letters, in which they declared that the future of humanity in general "is dependent on the formation of sound spiritual bases, without which no true civilisation can exist. These spiritual bases cannot be laid outside the ethical framework of the Christian faith."

Many scholars from other countries, including Professor C.A. Millikan and R. Aitken, also supported this affirmation: that there is no contradiction between science and the Christian faith, but on the contrary, that science may be influenced by the eternal truth of Christian values to work towards a better world. Even from China scientists sent messages of encouragement to the members of Aktines.

We quote the words of Professor Millikan, holder of the Nobel prize: "I have been glad indeed to read your declaration and am very glad to let you know that I approve fully the content of this declaration and may be so quoted. In my judgment, what are commonly called spiritual values are more important than any material things. I hope that your declaration may have wide circulation and large influence the world over." E.P.S. Geneva

INDIA

Missionary Programme of the Younger Churches

The Triennial meeting of the All India Council of the National Missionary Society was held at the Madras Christian College, Tambaram, from December 29 to January 1st. The theme of the meeting was: The Task of the N.M.S. in Free India. The question of the position of the National Missionary Society to the Church was discussed.

"The N.M.S.", writes "The Guardian" (Madras, January 8, 1948), "in consonance with one of its two main objects should help in vivifying the life of the Church. It must have specially trained men to travel among the Churches and answer their call to rouse the evangelistic spirit. In cooperation with the National Christian Council, it should constantly bring home to the Churches the challenge of carrying the Gospel to all parts of the country... The N.M.S. should seek to coordinate the work of all Home Missions. While Churches find Home Missions a natural expression of their evangelistic zeal, the scope for joining in interdenominational work in distant unoccupied fields through the N.M.S. must be placed before the Churches."

It was agreed that the N.M.S. should establish closer relationship with the National Christian Council through affiliation. On matters relating to production of missionary literature and youth work, closer cooperation with the National Christian Council should be developed.

GERMANY — Tenth Anniversary of the Aktions movement

The Aktions Movement, which was started in 1938, is today celebrating its tenth anniversary. Its purpose is to bring Christian scientists into contact with one another. It publishes a periodical "Aktions", the last number of which is devoted to a survey of the work accomplished during these first ten years. "A spirit of living Christianity has replaced the materialistic and rationalistic spirit which - in groups as elsewhere - has been troubling the scientific world for more than a century". Our readers will remember that at Christmas 1946 (see E.C.U. No. 6, 1946) a manifesto was published, signed by 121 Greek scientists, artists and men of letters, in which they declared that the future of humanity in general "is dependent on the formation of sound spiritual bases, without which no true civilization can exist. These spiritual bases cannot be laid outside the ethical framework of the Christian faith."

Many scholars from other countries, including Professors C.A. Mirkin and R. Aitken, also supported this affirmation: that there is no contradiction between science and the Christian faith, but on the contrary, that science may be influenced by the eternal truth of Christian values to work towards a better world. Even from China scientists sent messages of encouragement to the members of Aktions.

We quote the words of Professor Mirkin, holder of the Nobel prize: "I have been glad indeed to read your declaration and am very glad to let you know that I express fully the contents of this declaration and may be to another, in my judgment, just are especially called spiritual values are more important than any material things. I hope that your declaration may have wide circulation and large influence the world over." E.C.U. News

INDIA — Missionary Priesthood of the Vellore Churches

The Triennial meeting of the All India Council of the National Missionary Society was held at the Union Christian College, Trichur, from December 29 to January 1st. The theme of the meeting was: The task of the N.M.S. in free India. The question of the position of the National Missionary Society to the Church was discussed.

"The N.M.S. strives to be Christian" (Indra, January 1, 1948). "In consonance with one of its two main objects namely in strengthening the life of the Church. It must have a totally trained man to travel among the Churches and answer their call to cross the overwhelmingly material world. In accordance with the National Christian Council, it should constantly bring back to the Churches the challenge of serving the Gospel to all parts of the country... The N.M.S. should seek to coordinate the work of all Christian missions. While Conference first made Missions a direct participation of Church in evangelistic work, the scope for joining in inter-denominational work in addition of unconventional fields through the N.M.S. must be placed before the Churches."

It was further said that the N.M.S. should establish closer relationship with the National Christian Council in Tribulation. The Conference solicited the production of missionary literature, youth work, closer cooperation with the Christian Literature Society.

Regarding methods it was urged that only through communities of men and women, true believers and faithful disciples knit together in the bords of charity and self surrender to Christ can the Gospel of Divine life be manifested. The same applies to communities of families. The Ashram method with all its variations was highly commended. "Man is the method" implied the fuller development of the missionary's personality as well as of all connected with the society.

E.P.S. Geneva

GERMANY

The Church and de-Nazification

The Church has recently published several pronouncements on the question of de-Nazification. Bishop Lilje of Hanover has sent a memorandum to the political authorities in the British Zone, advocating a "positive policy of de-Nazification". The Church leaders of Nassau and Hesse, whose head is Church-President Pastor Niemöller, have made a similar pronouncement from the pulpit to their congregations.. Furthermore the Church Conferences in the British and American Zones have published declarations concerning the same question. Bishop Wurm of Württemberg and Bishop Meiser of Bavaria have written pastoral letters about "The Church and de-Nazification".

In reply to the pronouncement of the Church in Hessen-Nassau, General L. Clay, Military Governor of the U.S. Zone in Germany, said, "It is bad citizenship to encourage people to disobey the law of the land".

We quote the essential parts of some of the above statements. Bishop Lilje says, "the weakest spot in the administration hitherto is the fact that it leaves no door open for political re-thinking and conversion. The de-Nazification policy will remain futile as along as it exhauts itself in negative measures. The door should be left open for positive de-Nazification. If the law does not create ample opportunity for people to prove their political good faith, it is valueless. It is impossible for people to prove their political good faith, unless persons willing to assume the responsibility are found who are prepared to act as guarantee for them. If no such responsible persons existed, and if the law left no possibility for political action of this kind, the conclusion to be drawn concerning the ethical condition of Germany would be deplorable."

Bishop Lilje's declaration closes with the request for the most honest judicial execution of the law. This entails the complete independence of those who have to take decisions in legal courts, the punctilious observation of the laws of the constitutional State, the possibility of appeal and opportunity for the re-examination of cases which have already been dealt with. "If the law does not provide a guarantee that verdicts will not be biased by political feeling or economic competition or revenge, it is unworthy of a great nation, and its effect on the spiritual recovery of Germany is not only valueless - it is detrimental."

The pronouncement of the Church of Hessen-Nassau, signed by Pastor Niemöller, culminates in the following sentences: "From the very beginning the Evangelical Church has endeavoured to liberate the German people from the evil spirit of National Socialism. But after the law of liberation was enforced, the Church gave a warning that this law might easily lead to a hard and unrepentant attitude, because it compels a large proportion of the population to justify them-

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selves and pose as innocent. It also pointed out that this law could very easily be turned into an instrument of retribution. These fears have been realised and even surpassed; for the attempt to eradicate National-Socialism by means of this law has been an utter failure... The Evangelical Church has often maintained that punishment should be meted out only in cases where guilt has been proved; but the Church's opinion was ignored. Today the utter catastrophe is plain. The Geraman people has not been led along the path of reconciliation, but along that of retribution, and the seeds of new hatred are already rank in their growth. Many serious Christians, who with a deep sense of responsibility offered to assist in carrying out this law, are now greatly troubled in mind and tortured by pangs of conscience.

"In this situation we must ask all Christians the serious question, whether they can still assume the responsibility of taking part voluntarily in carrying out procedure which engenders hatred, instead of encouraging justice and reconciliation. This is a serious challenge to the Christian conscience, and in our view we must beg Christians not to act as public prosecutors or as voluntary witnesses for the prosecution, thus cooperating in something which results in so much wrong. Otherwise you will be in danger of betraying your calling as Christians, which means to be workers for reconcilation. We must say the same about the office of President or legal assessor at a tribunal, unless the Christian feels quite certain in his conscience that he is thereby serving the cause of reconciliation.

"But we are forced to challenge Christians with this question. More, we must point out that whenever a Christian pastor volunteers to assist in carrying out the law of liberation, it is a scandal in the eyes of the Christian community because confidence in the effectiveness, justice and humanity of the whole procedure is completely shattered. We must therefore prohibit our pastors - for the sake of their office and of our Christian Church - from sharing any longer in the responsibility for this scandal." E.P.S. Geneva

U.S.S.R. The Russian Orthodox Church and the Churches of the World

The December 1947 number of the "Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate" gives an account of the inaugural address delivered by the new Rector of the Theological Academy in Moscow, Bishop Hermogen, on November 23, 1947.

The Bishop Hermogen emphasised "the enormous historical significance of the Theological Academy", not only within the Orthodox Churches but also for the Churches in other countries throughout the Eastern and Western hemispheres. This enormous significance revealed itself especially in the crisis through which Western-European theology is passing.

One proof of this were the Church Conferences held at Stockholm, Lausanne, Oxford and Edinburgh, which assembled the representatives of the different confessions,"Protestants, Anglicans, Old Catholics and Orthodox". At these conferences "there was an amazing vagueness of theological thought on all the fundamental questions of the Christian religion". The only points about which many of them were agreed were "faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Holy Trinity,

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as the essentials of Christianity". The doctrines of the Incarnation, the Resurrection, the cult of the Virgin (Ikons) were "either rejected or regarded as of secondary importance."

The crisis in Western-European theology culminated in the dogma concerning the Church. Some people maintain that "the One True Church does not exist". The unity of the Church is therefore brought about only through a unification of all its component parts, in which differences of doctrine are allowed to fall into oblivion, as not being essential for our salvation. Another sign of the crisis in the theological interpretation of the dogma of the Church is "the secularisation of the Church" through which the Church "is changed from the mystical Body of Christ into a purely earthly, political organisation" with ideals "which have nothing to do with the salvation of men's souls".

In Roman Catholicism the Church is used "as a weapon in the solution of economic and political questions; it is regarded as the Church's duty to protect certain social orders which are incompatible with the teaching of the Gospel". Thus Popes Pius XI and Pius XII "made the Catholic Church into the protagonist of Fascism, in its struggle against the democratic parties". In this case the Church is "not the Kingdom of God, the place of salvation for sinful mankind, delivered up to death and damnation" but "a secular authority serving political ends". By so doing, Rome was denying the "highest commandment of Christ - the commandment to love our neighbour, which is the basis of patriotism" which "in the Catholic consciousness is atrophied". The Vatican, as "the possessor of fabulous wealth is interested in its economic policy in economic monopolies", today connected principally with American capital. In so doing Rome has lost "the ecumenical teaching of the Church as the Body of Christ... which should never become an instrument in the service of political parties".

"The confusion which reigns within Protestant theology" continued Bishop Hermogen "is still greater". Its manifold expression are "the fruit of the arbitrary interpretation of the Scriptures during the nineteenth century at the expense of the divine revelation". Protestant theology had "treated Christianity without Christ... rejected the dogma of the Church and thereby widened the cleft." But since 1933 "the longing within Protestantism to rediscover unity with the universal Church" had become apparent. The ecumenical conferences mentioned before have convinced the Protestant world to an increasing extent that "the Church not only exercises a moral influence, but is also an indispensable, divine institution for the salvation of men". This explains "the return of Protestantism to church dogmatics and to the clarification of essential questions of salvation".

The Anglican Church is described as a third Church-group with "vague theological conceptions" - a Church which "would like to remain Catholic without allegiance to the Pope, which respects Calvin and Luthern, but which retains the old Church institutions - symbols of faith, the Apostolic Succession, the Sacraments, the doctrine of the visible Church, etc., and which since 1918 has come closer - in its conception of the Church - to the Orthodox Church". At the same time "the Anglican Church is trying to extend its relations with the other Protestant Churches". It wants to be "a bridge between the different confessions, by which, from the standpoint of the pure ecumenical doctrine of the Church, it

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can only compromise itself". If the Anglican Church thinks it possible "to have fellowship at the same time with the Orthodox Church and the Protestant Churches, that speaks clearly for the instability of the theological conceptions of its learned representatives".

In face of this crisis, of which there are so many examples, "the question involuntarily arises: who can, and who should show Christendom the way today to authentic ecumenical orthodoxy in its full depth and purity? This enormous, responsible task can only be fulfilled under the guidance of the Orthodox Church". Obedience to the Church "which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" in which "great is the mystery of godliness" (I. Tim 3:15), is one of the principal duties of Christians. The history of faith and the history of the universal Church "confirm the infallibility of the Church in the sphere of doctrine". But owing to "the inadequacy of the fallen creature, and through the false conception of reason and of freedom, a false tendency has arison, a deviation from ecumenical orthodoxy". "We therefore pray to God, and we are sure that the work of the Moscow Academy for spiritual illumination will always be inspired by the word of the Apostle Paul : 'Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle' (II. Thess. 2:15)." E.P.S. Geneva

FRANCE

Use of French in the Administration of the Sacraments

The Holy Congregation of Rites has sent a favourable reply to the request of Cardinal Suhard, Archbishop of Paris, asking permission to use the French language in his diocese "in the administration of many Sacraments - Baptism, Extreme Unction, Metrimony and Burial, - as allowed in similar cases in several other parts of Europe".

A ritual in two languages is being prepared by the liturgical commission of the diocese of Paris, and will appear in a few months. E.P.S. Geneva

Competition: Christ and World Friendship

The office which is arranging the competition "Christ and World Friendship" (see E.P.S. No. 33, 1947) reminds readers that all entries for this competition should be sent before April 30, 1948, to 37 Quai Wilson, Geneva, or to the national correspondents for the competition. The exact date of birth of the competitor must be given. E.P.S.Geneva

General Secretary of World's YWCA on her Visit to the East

Miss Helen Roberts, General Secretary, at a meeting at Geneva, spoke of her experiences in the East where she attended the World's YWCA Council meeting in Hangshow. She emphasised the great danger of identifying the Church with the West and the importance of close cooperation between Christians of East and West in the common tasks which they face. Speaking of the visit which she, along with a delegation of 10, paid to Japan, Miss Roberts said that the readiness of people in Japan to turn to Christianity as a working faith is recognised by Japanese Christians as a danger and they realise the need to emphasise the way of the Cross in Christian teaching. E.P.S. Geneva